

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1156
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.12.2024

Forest fires

1156. SHRI S NIRANJAN REDDY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the estimated increase/decrease in the number of forest fires in the country over the last five years;
- (b) whether Government has identified the key reasons for forest fires in the country;
- (c) the measures taken to address the increasing frequency of forest fires and the steps being implemented to build local capacity for disaster management; and
- (d) State-wise list of total loss incurred due to forest fires in last five years?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) The forest fire incidences in the country are detected by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun using satellite-mounted sensors. As per the data received from the FSI, Dehradun, the total forest fire incidences detected in the last forest fire season i.e., November 2023 to June 2024 were 2,03,544; which is less than the number of forest fire detections reported in the previous forest fire season, i.e., 2,12,249. The total number of forest fire incidences detected in the country over the last five forest fire seasons are given in **Annexure-I**.

(b) Seasonal forest fires occur every year due to various natural and anthropogenic reasons including the accumulation of inflammable materials on the forest floor such as dry leaves, twigs, pine needles, etc. Most of the forest fires occurred in the country are attributed to anthropogenic reasons. The number of incidences of forest fire in the country vary from forest fire season to forest fire season, depending on the vulnerability of the forests to various forest fire risk factors.

(c) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has put in place a National Action Plan on Forest Fire-2018, which provides comprehensive measures to prevent forest fires, and to improve the resilience of the forests against fire hazards. The State Governments/UT Administrations also prepare State Action Plans, in tandem with the National Action Plan to undertake State/UT-specific measures towards forest fire prevention and management.

The Ministry supports targeted efforts of the States / UTs in prevention and control of forest fire through the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)- Forest Fire Prevention and Management. The scheme supports various forest fire prevention and mitigation activities including, the creation and maintenance of fire lines, water conservation

structures inside forest areas, procurement of firefighting equipment, incentivizing villages/communities for protection against forest fire, etc.

The Ministry through the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun provides one-week advance alerts based on the Fire Weather Index. In addition, Near Real Time (NRT) forest fire alerts using MODIS sensors are disseminated as SMS alerts to the registered subscribers so that timely action can be taken on the field to combat forest fires besides monitoring it live over the Van Agni Portal [https://vanagniportal.fsiforestfire.gov.in/fsi_fire/fire.html], maintained by the FSI, Dehradun.

Forest fires of disastrous proportions come under the purview of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Disaster Management Authorities at the State and District levels. Institutional mechanisms for combating forest fires at the disaster scale have already been formalized for suitable incorporation in the National, State, and District level disaster management plans. In this regard, setting up of Crisis Management Groups for Forest Fires, mock drills with the involvement of the stakeholder agencies and local communities, escalation matrix to involve the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) in forest fire control, community awareness and capacity building for forest fire prevention and control, etc., are undertaken.

The Ministry in coordination with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), have trained three battalions of the NDRF, comprising 150 personnel to tackle Large Forest Fires. These battalions are deployed as per the requirements to control forest fires in various locations in the country as per the evolving requirements.

Further, forest fire prevention and its management is primarily the responsibility of concerned State Governments /UT Administrations.

(d) As per the report received from the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, forest fire burnt scar assessments based on the requests received from the State Forest Departments of Kerala and Uttarakhand for the forest fire season 2021-2022 and of the State of Manipur for the forest fire season 2022-2023 were carried out.

Approximately, 85.89 square kilometres were delineated as burnt scars in Kerala, and 1781.39 square kilometres were delineated as burnt scars in Uttarakhand during the forest fire season 2021-2022. For the State of Manipur, approximately 861.32 square kilometres of burnt forest area was delineated during the forest fire season 2022-2023.

No estimation of economic losses due to forest fires in the country has been made by the Ministry.

Annexure-I

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN THE REPLY TO PART (a) OF THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1156 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 05.12.2024 REGARDING FOREST FIRES ASKED BY SHRI S NIRANJAN REDDY

State/UT-wise number of forest fires detected by Forest Survey of India using SNPP-VIIRS sensors over past 5 forest fire seasons (this includes large, continuous and repeated forest fires).

Sr. No	State/UTs	SNPP-VIIRS Detections				
		Nov 2019 to Jun 2020	Nov 2020 to Jun 2021	Nov 2021 to Jun 2022	Nov 2022 to Jun 2023	Nov 2023 to Jun 2024
1	Andhra Pradesh	9,996	19,328	14,138	19,367	18,174
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1,786	3,914	3,449	2,447	2,053
3	Assam	8,924	10,718	8,158	9,830	7,639
4	Bihar	614	5,179	3,024	3,793	2,763
5	Chhattisgarh	6,360	38,106	25,792	20,306	18,950
6	Delhi	21	14	3	7	16
7	Goa	47	45	20	147	36
8	Gujarat	2,770	3,803	2,769	2,342	3,182
9	Haryana	68	152	135	82	166
10	Himachal Pradesh	536	4,110	5,280	704	10,136
11	Jharkhand	2,613	21,713	9,419	11,923	7,525
12	Karnataka	4,232	5,784	4,973	13,074	5,500
13	Kerala	864	296	504	1,550	1,110
14	Madhya Pradesh	9,537	47,795	32,728	17,142	15,878
15	Maharashtra	14,018	34,025	22,052	16,119	16,008
16	Manipur	8,800	10,457	5,544	10,127	4,498
17	Meghalaya	6,762	7,658	6,322	6,604	4,319
18	Mizoram	7,361	12,846	8,734	5,798	6,627
19	Nagaland	2,905	4,975	3,471	3,882	2,609
20	Odisha	10,602	51,968	22,014	33,461	20,973
21	Punjab	153	635	428	119	605
22	Rajasthan	3,461	3,402	2,703	2,059	4,352
23	Sikkim	47	63	26	49	101
24	Tamil Nadu	1,368	1,220	1,035	1,998	3,380
25	Telangana	12,132	18,237	13,737	13,117	13,479
26	Tripura	4,369	5,015	2,609	4,332	2,089
27	Uttar Pradesh	1,548	8,608	5,428	3,235	4,424
28	Uttarakhand	759	21,487	12,985	5,351	21,033
29	West Bengal	1,320	3,287	1,520	3,096	2,020
30	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	39	16	33	20	21
31	Chandigarh	2	0	0	1	1
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	21	34	18	16	16
33	Jammu & Kashmir	438	1,098	4,255	131	3,829
34	Ladakh*			27	20	32
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	0	1	0	0	0
Total		124,473	3,45,989	2,23,333	2,12,249	2,03,544

* The number of forest fire detections in Ladakh are combined with the number of forest fire detections in Jammu & Kashmir for the fire season Nov 2019 to Jun 2020, Nov.2020 - June 2021.